

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 00001 011215Z

17

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 AID-05 CCO-00 FBO-02

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NIC-01 NSC-05 SP-02 OPR-01

PA-01 USSS-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SS-15

SY-04 OC-05 SCS-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 IO-10

SAM-01 CU-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 OS-01 /104 W

----- 035852

O R 011120Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1129

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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DEPT PASS SECRETARY

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EG

SUBJ: VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN CAIRO

1. STREET DEMONSTRATIONS BEGAN THIS MORNING IN CAIRO AND
HELWAN. JOURNALISTS JUST RETURNED FROM COVERING CAIRO
RIOTS TELL US LARGEST GROUP HAS LEFT TAHRIR STREET NEAR
EMBASSY AND HAS PROCEEDED DOWNTOWN TOWARD AKHBAR AL-YAWM
BUILDING, BURNING CARS AND THROWING ROCKS NEAR HILTON
AND BAB AL-LUK. SECURITY FORCES WITH HELMETS AND
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 00001 011215Z

BATONS HAVE BEEN THROWING GAS CANNISTERS AND WIELDING

NIGHTSTICKS, BUT HAVE APPARENTLY NOT BEEN ABLE TO

STOP PROGRESS OF DEMONSTRATORS. AP REPORTER TELLS US CROWD IS IN "HUNDREDS", AND LARGE GROUPS ARE STILL IN TAHRIR SQUARE, SIX BLOCKS FROM EMBASSY. DOWNTOWN SHOPS ARE SHUT UP TIGHT.

2. DEMONSTRATORS ARE CARRYING PLACARDS DENOUNCING PRIME MINISTER AND HIGH COMMODITY PRICES AND PRAISING SOCIALISM AS PURVEYED BY NASSER. POLICE ARE APPARENTLY ATTRIBUTING RIOTS TO "THE COMMUNISTS," AND CLAIM PRIME MOVERS ARE STUDENTS AND HELWAN LABOR UNIONS. LATTER REPORTEDLY DEMAND WAGE RAISE SIMILAR TO THAT RECENTLY GIVEN TO WHITE COLLAR WORKERS.

3. WE HAVE NO FIRM INDICATION THAT DEMONSTRATORS WILL MOVE OUR WAY, BUT GROUPS ARE BEGINNING TO SCATTER IN MORE THAN ONE DIRECTION. WE ARE INSTRUCTING EMBASSY STAFF TO STAY INSIDE AND AUC WILL DO THE SAME. WE HAVE HAD CALLS FROM AMERICAN TOURISTS ASKING FOR GUIDANCE, AND WE HAVE RECOMMENDED THEY STAY INSIDE. NO IMMEDIATE DANGER TO AMERICAN LIVES OR PROPERTY FORESEEN AT THE MOMENT, BUT CAIRO MOBS, ESPECIALLY IF COMMUNIST INSPIRED, ARE TRADITIONALLY UNPREDICTABLE.

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE FOR SOME TIME REPORTED ACTIVITY OF DISSIDENT ELEMENTS (PARTICULARLY MARXIST) WITHIN LABOR UNIONS AND STUDENT GROUPS. WHILE CURRENT RIOTS ARE APPARENTLY CAUSED BY DOMESTIC ISSUES - LOW WAGES, HIGH PRICES - IT IS NOT UNLIKELY THAT POSTPONEMENT BREZHNEV VISIT, WHICH SEEN BY PUBLIC HERE AS SLAP IN GOE'S FACE, MAY HAVE TRIGGERED THE DEMONSTRATIONS.
EILTS

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECRETARY.

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